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ABSTRACT

This document includes the final report of a project to develop a process for preparing adult basic education (ABE) practitioners to use a "work first" instructional model and a practitioner training manual. The report details how four literacy practitioners worked with mentors experienced in teaching work force education to adapt work force literacy curricula and approaches to traditional ABE and tutoring sessions and how they used the revised curriculum to provide 50 hours of instruction to 10 welfare recipients. The training manual includes the following materials for each of the four training sessions: goals, introductory materials, learning activities, and wrap-up activities. The session topics are as follows: impacts of welfare reform on learners and differences between the approaches used by work force and community educators; techniques for adapting work force lessons to ABE classrooms and ascertaining learner goals; results of implementation of the work force lesson plan in ABE classrooms; and key elements that must be included in a "work first" instructional model. Appended are eight handouts, including the following: excerpt from a workbook for literacy program developers, case study, self-evaluation and session evaluation forms, sample work force lesson plan, and sample learner questionnaire. (MN)

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ED 427 224

Preparing Adult Practitioners For A "Work-First" Instructional Model Necessitated By Welfare Reform

FINAL REPORT

Judi Taylor, Project Director

Center for Literacy, Inc.
636 South 48th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19139
(215) 474 - 1235

Fiscal Year: 1997 - 98

Federal Funding: $5,000

Contract Number 98-8004

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ABSTRACT PAGE

Grant Recipient: Center for Literacy, Inc.
636 South 48th Street
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Project No: 98-8004

Program Name: Preparing Adult Practitioners For A "Work-First" Instructional Model Necessitated By Welfare Reform

Grant Allocation: $5,000

Project Period: July 1, 1997 - June 30, 1998

Project Director: Judi Taylor

Project Purpose: The project proposed to document the process that the Center for Literacy (CFL) used to prepare teachers and tutors to move from the traditional adult basic education model to a work-first model and to create a manual that other adult literacy providers could use to duplicate the process.

Project Outcomes: CFL successfully documented the process that was used to prepare four adult basic education teachers to move from the traditional adult basic education model to a work-first model. The documentation was used to create a manual that other adult literacy providers could use to duplicate the process. Ten CFL learners were administered a survey at the point of registration, enrollment (completion of 12 hours of instruction), and at the completion of 50 hours of instruction. The most significant finding was that six learners indicated that they were not interested in working until they had fully prepared themselves. After12 hours of instruction, all ten indicated that they felt more confident about working. After 50 hours of instruction, six wanted to continue with the class, three wanted to continue their education elsewhere, two were ready to look for employment, and one wanted to help her grandchildren.

Impact: The greatest impact that this project had was on the attitudes of the adult basic education practitioners towards the literacy field's role in the new environment of welfare reform. At the onset of the project, it was met with reservation as indicated on the discussion in the first session, their journal entries and the session evaluation questionnaires. As the project progressed, their opinions and attitudes changed as demonstrated by their discussion during subsequent meetings, journal entries and session evaluation forms.

Product or Training Developed: A training manual was developed for adult basic education and literacy agencies.

Products Available From: The product is available from AdvanceE.

Project Continuation: CFL will continue to explore ways to enhance the curriculum in order to better prepare learners, who indicate employment goals, for the world of work. The use of mentoring across disciplines will be continued as a way for educators to share information.

Conclusions/recommendations: Adult basic education and literacy practitioners can adapt the curricula and approaches that are used in workforce education to traditional adult basic education classes and tutoring sessions.

Additional Comments: It is important to note that this staff development effort was a year long process. Educators had to overcome their resentment concerning welfare reform, their own fear of failure, and their perceived lack of time before attempting to adapt workforce curricula and approaches.

FINAL REPORT
PREPARING ADULT PRACTITIONERS FOR A WORK-FIRST INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL NECESSITATED BY WELFARE REFORM

Introduction

Across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, education, health and human service providers who serve welfare recipients are being forced to adjust their service delivery plan due to the sweeping impact of welfare reform. Adult basic education and literacy organizations have to make decisions on how best to serve this population. Previously, welfare recipients enrolled in an educational activity received special allowances covering the cost of transportation, child care, and educational materials for as long as an individual received food stamps. With the enactment of the Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF) legislation, welfare recipients have been given a time limit of twelve months for receiving support while they are participating in an educational activity. In addition, they must have a twenty hour a week job after two years to remain eligible for public assistance, and have a life-time limit of five years.

In 1992, the National Adult Literacy Survey conducted by Educational Testing Service, presented the results of interviews of 26,000 American adults 16 years of age and older. Results were reported based on five skills levels, representing degrees of complexity of literacy tasks the adults could accomplish with consistent success. The State Adult Literacy Survey used the same questions with a sample of 1,626 adult Pennsylvanians. Scoring in the lowest two levels were 66% of the adults whose families received public assistance.

These facts coupled with the educational limits and work requirements of welfare reform presented a very serious and immediate challenge for CFL and other literacy providers serving learners receiving welfare benefits. Providers have to develop and implement new curriculum and approaches to meet the challenge of education in this new environment and to prepare learners for the workforce. Additionally, adult literacy practitioners will have corresponding staff development issues and needs as a result of the educational changes.

The purpose of this project was to document the process that the Center for Literacy (CFL) used to prepare teachers and tutors to move from the traditional adult basic education model to a work-first model using workforce education as a guide, and to create a manual that other adult literacy providers could use to duplicate the process.

The project was conducted during the period July 1, 1997 through June 30, 1998.

Contributing significantly to the project were Judi Taylor, project director; Yvonne McCoy, program coordinator for workforce education and mentor; Charles Campbell, workforce teacher and mentor; Jane McGovern, workforce teacher and mentor; and Yvette Walls, education for work teacher and mentor. The practitioners mentored were Lana Lopez, community and family literacy teacher; Mark Edmonds, community teacher and West Philadelphia area coordinator for tutoring programs; Ruth Sugar, community teacher and program coordinator for family literacy; Michelle Scott, program coordinator for volunteer programs and coordinator of the Literacy Corps Program.

This project is intended to be a guide for agencies who serve welfare recipients in adult basic education and literacy programs and have experience in workforce education.

It would also be useful for adult basic education and literacy programs in one agency who wanted to partner with a workforce education provider in order to implement this staff development model.

This project will be available through:

AdvancE
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this project was to document the process that CFL used to prepare teachers and tutors to move from the traditional adult basic education model to a work-first model using workforce education as a guide, and to create a manual that other adult literacy providers could use to duplicate the process.

CFL served over 2,600 learners in the 1997-98 fiscal year, within the city of Philadelphia. Forty-seven percent of the total student body were receiving welfare benefits. The six primary reasons for participation in CFL's program in the 1996-97 year, as identified by welfare recipients were: to improve basic skills; to prepare for the GED; to improve math skills; to improve personal writing skills; to read books; and to write letters, notes and cards. The curriculum that teachers and tutors used reflected those goals.

After the implementation of Welfare Reform initiatives, in the 1997-98 fiscal year, the six primary reasons for participation in CFL's program as identified by welfare recipients were: to prepare for the GED; to improve basic skills; to improve math skills; job related reasons; to improve personal writing skills; and to study and train for a job. Two work related goals were now being indicated. CFL's learner centered philosophy dictates that the agency must respond accordingly with curriculum and approaches that help learners meet their goals. Before new curriculum, methods and materials could be created or adapted, staff development needed to occur.

This problem is being faced by literacy organizations across the Commonwealth. Through this project, service providers can initiate a staff development process within their agencies, in order to better serve TANF clients.

Goals and Objectives

The goal of this project was to document the process that CFL used to prepare teachers and tutors to move from the traditional adult basic education model to a work-first model. The objectives included:

1. To document the training used to prepare four adult literacy practitioners to adapt workforce literacy curricula and approaches to traditional adult basic education classes and tutoring sessions.
2. To provide documentation of four practitioners' successes and challenges as they work towards adapting workforce literacy curricula and approaches to traditional adult basic education learning environments.
3. To document the impact of the changed curriculum on ten welfare recipients who completed fifty hours of instruction.

Procedures Employed

Before beginning this process we made an assumption that if we created a vehicle for workforce and community teachers to share, explore and question their present practice, within the sum total of their experiences are the answers on how best to meet the needs of welfare recipients. The vehicle identified consisted of an action research model where

four experienced workforce education teachers were paired with four adult basic education practitioners.

Before the first session, adult basic education teachers were asked to complete a self-evaluation form that was designed by the project manager. The form ascertained their present level of knowledge concerning workforce education, learner goals, and their present practice. At the end of the project, the participants completed the form again. Using a dialogue journal and any other means of communication, each workforce educator shared curriculum and approaches with the ABE instructor they are mentoring, weekly. The ABE teachers, in consultation with their mentor (workforce education teacher), attempted to try the lesson and/or approaches with their learners. ABE teachers communicated the result of their attempts using the dialogue journal, and other means of communications, with the workforce educator. All project participants met quarterly to discuss their successes and challenges. The project director taped the sessions using an audio cassette player. By the second quarterly meeting, project participants had designed an evaluation form that learners completed at registration, enrollment and at the completion of 50 hours. The evaluation form was used to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness at helping learners reach their goals. Through this process, the group determined which elements of workforce education could be extrapolated and used in a traditional adult basic education class to better prepare learners for employment. At the end of each session, participants were asked to complete a session evaluation form. The manual was prepared using the information from the whole group sessions, dialogue journals, session evaluation forms, and the learner surveys.

Objectives Met

1. **To document the training used to prepare four adult literacy practitioners to adapt workforce literacy curricula and approaches to traditional adult basic education classes and tutoring sessions.**

   The training was documented using an audio cassette player, dialogue journals, session evaluation forms, practitioner evaluation forms, and learner questionnaires.

2. **To provide documentation of four practitioners' successes and challenges as they work towards adapting workforce literacy curricula and approaches to traditional adult basic education learning environments.**

   The practitioners' successes and challenges were documented using an audio cassette player, dialogue journals and practitioner evaluation forms.

3. **To document the impact of the changed curriculum on ten welfare recipients who completed fifty hours of instruction.**

   The impact of the changed curriculum was documented using the learner questionnaires.

Objectives Not Met

All objectives were met.

Evaluation Instrument(s)/Technique(s)

The practitioners' self-evaluation form and the learner questionnaires were the instruments used to evaluate the success of the project.

Dissemination

Copies of this report and product are available through AdvancE.

Conclusion

Adult basic education and literacy practitioners can adapt the curricula and approaches that are used in workforce education to traditional adult basic education classes and tutoring sessions. Specifically, they were able to help learners connect the writing that is required for the GED, the writing needed to communicate with welfare and school officials, and the writing they will need to use once they begin working. Practitioners were also able to add to the lessons they previously used to include teaching the "soft skills" by changing their approach or method of instruction. Examples sited by educators during group sessions and in their journal writing were "communication skills, creative thinking, leadership, conflict resolution, learning how to learn, use of technology, work ethics, negotiation within a group, working with a group, following directions, and working cooperatively." This was accomplished using cooperative learning strategies, individual research projects, and volunteering in schools and hospitals.

Additional Comments

CFL was a field development site for the Equipped for the Future (EFF) field test from February 1, 1998 - June 30, 1998. The project director, one mentor, and two of the teachers being mentored were EFF participants. Though the Preparing Adult

Practitioners For A Work-First Instructional Model Necessitated By Welfare Reform was designed and implemented before CFL became involved with EFF. It is important to acknowledge the influence that the EFF initiative had on this project.

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Preparing Adult Practitioners For A "Work-First" Instructional Model Necessitated By Welfare Reform

PRODUCT: MANUAL

Judi Taylor, Project Director

Center for Literacy, Inc.
636 South 48th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19139
(215) 474 - 1235

Fiscal Year: 1997 - 98

Federal Funding: $5,000

Contract Number 98-8004

The activity which is the subject of this report was supported in part by the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Department of education or the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and no official endorsement by these agencies should be inferred.

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Preparing Adult Practitioners for A "Work-First" Instructional Model Necessitated by Welfare Reform

Preparation for Session One

The facilitator should bring the following information to the first session:

- number of learners attending your program who are receiving welfare benefits;
- the top five or six reasons for program participation as indicated by welfare recipients attending your program;
- project design (handout 1);
- article(s) on the benefits of using the "world of work" as the context for teaching adult basic education (handout 2);
- a description of a fictitious, yet typical class in your program including their goals, reading levels, and work experiences (handouts 3 and 4); and
- a computer disk and/or journal for each mentoring pair.

Choosing Participants:

- Effective mentors should have teaching experience in workforce education.
- Ideally, practitioners chosen to be mentored should have experience teaching adult basic education classes and generally be open to new ideas. In addition, their learners should be receiving Temporary Aid For Needy Families.

Reflections: "Our agency served over 2,800 learners in the 1996-97 fiscal year, within Philadelphia. Forty-seven percent of the total student body were receiving welfare benefits. Our mission and philosophy makes it our responsibility to respond to Welfare Reform by assisting our learners achieve their goals. Our data show that their goals are now job related in nature. Our curriculum and approach must respond accordingly."
- Judi Taylor, Director of Educational Services, Center for Literacy

Preparing Adult Practitioners For A "Work-First" Instructional Model Necessitated by Welfare Reform

Session One Goals

The goals of this four hour session are:

- to introduce the practitioners to the project;
- to encourage the practitioners to discuss their feelings surrounding the impact of welfare reform on their learners;
- to discuss the benefit of using a functional context approach to teaching reading, writing and math;
- to demonstrate the difference between the workforce educator's approach to designing a lesson and the community educator's approach to designing a lesson; and
- to select mentoring pairs.

Reflections: "The very name 'Work First' raises my hackles. Does that mean education second? Unfortunately, it's been my experience that for the population we're dealing with in this initiative (welfare recipients), it becomes about putting them in the first job that becomes available…"
- Michelle Scott, Program Coordinator of Volunteer Programs, Center for Literacy

Session One

Goals: To introduce the practitioners to the project.
To encourage the practitioners to discuss their feelings surrounding the impact of welfare reform on their learners.
Time: 1.5 hours

Introduction of Session One

A. Welcome

B. Participants and the facilitator introduce themselves and briefly summarize their experience in adult education.

C. Review Session One Goals

Explanation of the Purpose of the Project

A. Facilitator distributes data on number of learners, attending your program, who are receiving welfare benefits and the top five or six reasons for program participation as indicated by welfare recipients attending your program. This helps to establish the need within your agency.

B. Facilitator asks participants how welfare reform has impacted their learners.

C. Facilitator distributes Project Design (handout 1) to participants.

D. Facilitator reviews information on the Project Design handout, agency data and answers questions.

> "This project helps break through the isolation of our practice."
> -Yvette Walls, Education for Work Teacher, Center for Literacy

Session One

Goal: To discuss the benefits of using a functional context approach to teaching reading, writing and math.
Time: 30 minutes

Review of Literature

A. Distribute article, excerpt from a book etc., on the benefits of using a functional context approach to teaching reading, writing and math.

B. All participants read the article silently.

C. Each participant highlights a sentence that stands out for them in the literature.

D. Without discussion, each participant reads aloud the sentence chosen.

E. Facilitator asks: "Do you agree with the writer?" Participants should be encouraged to use their personal and professional experiences to support their position.

F. Break

Reflections: "I like your suggestion to use such experiences and the experiences had by learners to reflect on good work practices. My McDonald's fiasco provides a good number of alternative behaviors for us to discuss. It is important to mesh the concepts of what you expect as a consumer and what you are willing to deliver as an employee. This incorporates using concrete personal experiences, and analytical skills."
-Ruth Sugar, Adult Basic Education Teacher, Center for Literacy

Session One

Goal: To demonstrate the difference between the workforce educator's approach to designing a lesson and the community educator's approach to designing a lesson.

Time: 1.5 hours

Activity

A. Divide participants into two groups. One group should have all the ABE teachers and one group should have the workforce educators.

B. Distribute the Case Study handout and the Description of Learners handout to both groups.

C. Both groups have an hour to develop a lesson plan according to the instructions.

D. In the last thirty minutes, both groups will present their lessons

E. List any themes that emerged

F. List similarities and differences in content or approaches

G. Break

Reflections: "The community teachers created the lesson from an approach that looked at skills being taught and integrated the skill to the workplace. The workplace teachers looked at the skills needed in the workplace and integrated the workplace needs to the literacy skills."
-Jane McGovern, Workforce Educator, Center for Literacy

Session One

Goal: To select mentoring pairs.
Time: 30 min.

Choose A Mentor

A. Ask each adult basic education teacher to choose a mentor from the workforce team.

B. Distribute computer disk and/or journal to each pair.

C. Allow the pairs to meet for five minutes to decide the best way to communicate with one another.

D. Question posed for first journal entry "What does a 'work-first' instructional model mean to you?"

E. Distribute and collect self-evaluation forms and session evaluation forms.

Wrap-up

A. Schedule next meeting.

B. Ask pairs to bring a sample of an evaluation form you would like learners to use to the next meeting.

Reflections: "Charles and I make a very effective team. He has much experience in dealing with all aspects of workforce training. I, on the other hand, have a background which is primarily academic in nature. As we proceed with this project, I feel comfortable that Charles will always be willing and able to lend his expertise and his experience to help me."
-Mark Edmonds, Adult Basic education Teacher, Center for Literacy

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Reflections: "As mentors we must make a personal commitment to talk to the person we are mentoring once a week."
-Yvonne McCoy, Program Coordinator for Workforce Education, Center for Literacy

Preparing Adult Practitioners For A "Work-First" Instructional Model Necessitated by Welfare Reform

Preparation for Session Two

- Arrange to meet briefly with each pair before session two to discuss progress on the creation of a learner questionnaire and mentoring activities.

- Arrange for one workforce educator to present a workforce lesson to the group at the next meeting.

Reflections: "I found it fascinating that the adult basic education teachers defined a work-first instructional model as teaching job readiness skills. Job readiness skills included creating a resume and cover letter. The workforce educators defined a work-first instructional model as job retention skills. Job retention included improvement of written, oral communication and interpersonal skills."
-Judi Taylor, Director of Educational Services, Center for Literacy

Preparing Adult Practitioners For A "Work-First" Instructional Model

Session Two Goals

The goals of this two hour session are:

- to share activities and progress of pairs;
- to present a workforce lesson to the group and brainstorm ideas on how that lesson could be adapted to work in an ABE class; and
- to finalize a learner questionnaire that will ascertain learners' goals and their satisfaction with the classes' ability to help them reach their goals.

Reflections: "What are you doing with this GED essay? You are taking a position and defending it. The way that you do it is to introduce your position which is the same thing as summarizing the main idea. You're supporting it with facts and details which is the same thing the class discusses in content: main idea, facts, details and closing. It's no different than writing a business letter where you state your reason for writing, support it, then close. The key is to show learners the connections of all writings and how it connects to their goal of getting the GED."
-Jane McGovern, Workforce Education Teacher, Center for Literacy

Session Two

Goal: To share activities and progress of pairs.
Time: 45 minutes

Introduction of Session Two

A. Welcome

B. Review session two goals

Sharing

A. Each participant shares activities and progress on this project by reading journal entries and/or through discussion.

B. The group discusses how their team is communicating and if it has been effective.

Reflections: This excerpt is taken from a mentoring pair's dialogue journal.

"With the combined effort of workforce teachers and community teachers we are to find a way to combine what is taught in workforce and what is taught in community classes. The new approach is teaching GED skills without practice workbooks."
-Lana Lopez, Adult Basic Education Teacher, Center for Literacy

"I don't think we said to focus on work-related skills vs. GED. I think first we must identify what skills are transferable to the workplace as well as what skills do folks need for work that we could help them with in addition to what we are already doing. Since most learners' long term goal is to be employed, how are we supporting this goal?"
-Jane McGovern, Workforce Teacher, Center for Literacy

Session Two

Goal: To present a workforce lesson to the group and brainstorm ideas on how that lesson could be adapted to work in an ABE class.

Time: 1 hour

Description of a Workforce Education Class

A. How is a workforce education class created?

B. Who decides within a company that one is needed?

C. What are the characteristics of the learners?

D. How is the curriculum developed?

Presentation of Lesson Plan

A. Distribute copies of a lesson plan

B. Review of lesson plan

C. Questions and comments about lesson plan

Brainstorm Ideas On Its Application In An ABE Class

A. Workforce educator asks for suggestions on how the lesson that was presented could be adapted in an ABE class.

B. All suggestions are written on a board.

C. Discuss barriers to implementation

D. Give assignment to participants to try an adaptation of the lesson with their class and be prepared to discuss the results at the third session meet.

E. Break

Reflections: "The basic idea of this project is good. Many of our learners may have to go to work soon and reading, writing and math are not the only workplace skills they need. People skills and problem-solving are also very necessary. Let's face it, how many times a week do you multiply or divide fractions - not many. But you know where to look to refresh yourself. That's how I try to teach"
Yvonne McCoy, Program Coordinator for Workforce Education, Center for Literacy.

Session Two

Goal: To finalize a learner questionnaire that will ascertain learners' goals and their satisfaction with the classes' ability to help them reach their goals.

Time: 1 hour and 15 minutes

Presentation of Learner Questionnaires

A. Facilitator states that the purpose of the learner questionnaires is to determine if the learners feel that the curriculum changes you are trying are helping them to meet their goals.

B. Each pair presents their questionnaire to the group with an explanation for asking each question.

Group Develops One Questionnaire

A. Facilitator asks the group for the pros and cons for each questionnaire examining content and format.

B. The group discusses and makes a decision on which questions should be included in the learner survey.

C. Once the questions and format have been determined, the facilitator tells the group that she/he will type the final product.

Wrap-up

A. Distribute and collect session evaluation forms

B. Schedule the next meeting.

C. Remind participants about trying an adaptation of the workforce lesson presented.

Reflections: "The questionnaires must have short ranges and clear questions." -Yvette Walls, Education for Work Teacher, Center for Literacy

Preparing Adult Practitioners For A "Work-First" Instructional Model Necessitated by Welfare Reform

Preparation for Session Three

- Type the learner survey and have copies to distribute to the teachers.
- Arrange to meet briefly with each pair before session three to discuss progress on mentoring activities.

Reflections: "Don't worry about what the agency needs are. You are the agency. You are developing a tool that you can use to gain information from your learners that will inform your practice."
- Judi Taylor, Director of Educational Services, Center for Literacy

Session Three Goals

The goals of this two hour session are:

- to share activities and progress of pairs;
- to share the results of the implementation of the workforce lesson plan.

Reflections: " I tried the workforce lesson but found it too challenging. The class had various work experiences and I couldn't find the commonality."
- Ruth Sugar, Adult Basic Education Teacher, Center for Literacy

Session Three

Goal: To share activities and progress of pairs.
Time: 45 minutes

Introduction of Session Three

A. Welcome

B. Review session goals

Sharing

A. Each participant shares activities and progress on this project by reading journal entries and/or through discussion.

B. The group discusses how their team is communicating and if it has been effective.

C. Break

Reflections: "Mark and I have an advantage because we have the Equipped for the Future Framework. The standards that are being promoted are the skills that people don't think of immediately when they think of the GED. It acknowledges and recognizes the value of other things such as communication skills, negotiation within a group, working with a group, working cooperatively, and listening skills."
- Ruth Sugar, Adult Basic Education Teacher, Center for Literacy

Session Three

Goal: To share the results of the implementation of the workforce lesson plan.
Time: 1 hour and 15 minutes

Presentation of Lesson Plan

A. Each participant presents an adaptation of the lesson they used with their class and how the learners responded.

B. After each presentation, the group discusses the information that was presented.

Wrap-up

A. Learner questionnaires are distributed and participants are asked to begin using the forms in their classes.

B. Participants are told that over the next three months, as forms are completed, they should be submitted to the facilitator. The forms will be used to show impact.

C. Distribute and collect session evaluation forms.

Reflections: "As an introduction to writing, my community class talked about how we write, who we write to and the reasons for writing. I started with asking in addition to writing for the GED, why else would they write. From there they became more specific. The class generated a list of people they had a need to write to which included their case worker, day care provider, jail, congress person and family members. The learners will write to the people listed. We will then talk about the different voices we use based on the audience. We will also discuss the voices used when speaking to people orally."
-Yvette Walls, Education for Work Teacher, Center for Literacy

Preparing Adult Practitioners For A "Work-First" Instructional Model Necessitated by Welfare Reform

Preparation for Session Four

- Arrange to meet briefly with each pair before session four to discuss progress on mentoring activities and learner surveys.
- Bring practitioner self-evaluation forms to the fourth session.
- Collect learner evaluation forms and create a summary of the results.

Reflections: "This class has enabled me to reason better. My vocabulary and math comprehension has improved and increased. My ability to assemble information and combine it into an orderly fashion has improved tremendously."
- Lorraine, Center For Literacy Learner

Preparing Adult Practitioners For A "Work-First" Instructional Model Necessitated by Welfare Reform

Session Four Goals

The goals of this two hour session are:

- to identify key elements that must be in a "work-first" instructional model based on their experiences throughout this project year;
- to share the preliminary results of the learner surveys; and
- to identify the next steps for the agency.

Reflections: "I've really come to appreciate Yvonne's discussions about the generality of workplace skills and the applicability to life in general. I worried so much about pigeon-holing learners into low-paying jobs. But, she's right. Communication skills, problem-solving skills, and general life management skills are all important and useful."
- Michelle Scott, Program Coordinator for Volunteer Programs, Center for Literacy

Session Four

Goal: To identify key elements that must be in a "work-first" instructional model based on their experiences throughout this project year.
Time: 45 Minutes

Introduction of Session Four

A. Welcome

B. Review session four goals

Identification of Key Elements

A. Divide the whole group into smaller groups of 3-4 people.

B. Have each small group brainstorm the key elements that they feel must be in a "work-first" instructional model.

C. Each small group presents their list to the whole group.

D. The facilitator highlights those items that each small group had in common.

E. Break

Reflections: "I have been working using the Equipped for the Future Content Framework. I am trying to build communication, creativity, leadership and conflict resolution skills."
-Mark Edmonds, Adult Basic Education Teacher, Center for Literacy

"In my Even Start Family Literacy class I implemented the work-first initiative using the parents' volunteer time in the school as the framework to discuss work ethics."
-Lana Lopez, Adult Basic Education Teacher, Center for Literacy

Session Four

Goal: To share the preliminary results of the learner surveys.
Time: 45 minutes

Sharing Results of Learner Survey

A. Distribute results of the learner surveys

B. Review the results with participants

C. Break into small groups. As a group answer the following questions:

1. "How will the results of this survey impact your practice?"
2. "Based on the learners' responses, was the project successful at helping prepare welfare recipients for work?"

D. Have one spokesperson from each small group share their responses

Reflections: "I like the learner surveys that Mark and Charles created because it takes into account the length of time a learner has spent in the classroom."
- Lana Lopez, Adult Basic Education Teacher, Center for Literacy

Session Four

Goal: To evaluate the effectiveness of this initiative and to identify its future within the agency.
Time: 30 minutes

Effectiveness and Future of This Initiative

A. Distribute blank practitioner self-evaluation forms and ask participants to complete the form.

B. Distribute the practitioner self-evaluation form that they completed at the beginning of the project.

C. Ask participants to compare and contrast their answers

D. Facilitator ask the following questions:

1. "After reviewing your answers, what changes within yourself have taken place?"
2. "Do you feel that this project accomplished its mission of helping you to adapt workforce curricula and approaches to your adult basic education class?"
3. "Do you feel that the project was worthwhile?"
4. "Should the project be expanded to include others?"

Wrap-up

A. Participants complete a session evaluation form.

B. Closing remarks

Reflections: "I know you have been struggling with the workforce issues. I hope this will help you see that they are not so different from the skills that our students need to live their everyday lives. If we can enhance a skill like reading to reading, understanding and following instructions, then we are on our way."

-Yvonne McCoy, Workforce Education Program Coordinator, Center for Literacy

Appendices

HANDOUTS

Handout 1 - Project Design

Handout 2 - Excerpt From Literacy at Work, The Workbook for Program Developers by Jorie Philippi (reprinted with permission)

Handout 3 - Case Study

Handout 4 - Description of Learners

Handout 5 - Self-Evaluation Forms

Handout 6 - Session Evaluation Forms

Handout 7 - Example of a Workforce Lesson Plan

Handout 8 - Example of a Learner Questionnaire

Handout 1

PROJECT DESIGN

This project makes an assumption that within the curricula and/or approaches used in workforce education and the experiences of the practitioners selected for this project is the answers on how best to serve welfare recipients enrolled in our adult basic education classes. This project will last one fiscal year.

1. One workforce education teacher is matched with one adult basic education teacher to form a mentoring pair.
2. Using a dialogue journal and any other means of communication, each workforce educator will share curriculum and approaches with the ABE instructor they are mentoring, weekly.
3. The ABE teachers, in consultation with their mentor (workforce education teacher), will attempt to try the lesson and/or approaches with their learners.
4. ABE teachers will communicate the result of their attempts using the dialogue journal and any other means of communications with the workforce educator.
5. All project participants will meet quarterly to discuss successes and challenges.
6. By the first quarterly meeting, project participants will have designed an evaluation form that learners will complete at registration, enrollment and at the completion of 50 hours, that will evaluate the teacher's effectiveness at helping learners reach their goals.
7. Through this process, the group will have determined which elements of workforce education can be extrapolated and used in a traditional adult basic education class to better prepare learners for employment.

Handout 2

Traditional adult basic education programs in schools differ from workplace literacy programs

Research conducted over the past 50 years in extensive military studies and private sector pilot programs provide strong evidence that generic basic skills instruction does not improve performance in specific content area tasks. More recent studies have demonstrated that job literacy tasks differ from academic literacy tasks. For example, the emphasis of on-the-job reading is on locating information for immediate use and problem solving, rather than the traditional classroom goal of remembering content for future reference. Locating information on a troubleshooting chart in a manual to use while making repairs is an example of one such 'reading to do' cluster of job skill applications. Some applications this tasks requires are:

- Identification of the problem by comparing existing conditions to normal conditions
- Categorizing the problem to generate a locator word or phrase to use in looking up information about the problem
- Recognizing what information in the manual is relevant to the problem and what is not
- Understanding how information is organized on the troubleshooting chart
- Knowing how to locate information on the chart
- Skimming and scanning headings
- Drawing conclusions
- Applying the information to the task

This cluster of reading skill applications is much more complex than reading a schoolbook paragraph to find a detail or to define a vocabulary word.

Traditional adult basic education programs measure results in grade level increases. Generally, for every hundred hours of program participation. Learners are expected to progress to a level equivalent to one year's school work. Program success is often defined by the percentage of participants who pass a test representing completion of a specified number of grade levels, or the equivalent of high school (the GED). In contrast, workplace literacy program success is measured in job performance improvement, which translates to cost benefits. Improvement of general literacy skills with generic academic materials, or completing a certain number of grade levels or years in school, does not necessarily transfer to mastery of job materials or teach the literacy skill application used on the job. The highest rates of transfer from literacy instruction to improved job performance occur when a functional context approach is used; that is, basic skills are taught in the context of job simulations. [1]

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[1] Philippi, Jorie, (1991) Literacy at Work, The Workbook for Program Developers. New York: Simon & Schuster Publishing. (reprinted with permission)

Handout 3

CASE STUDY

The best way to understand an approach is to see it in action. The team of workforce teachers and the team of adult basic education teachers will design one lesson plan that responds to the needs of a group of 15 learners. The skills to be acquired by the 15 learners are finding the details, restating and summarizing information. Reading, writing, speaking and listening must all be incorporated in the lesson. List the materials you would use. Explain the methodology you would use to facilitate the learning process. Explain how you would evaluate the student's progress.

Handout 4

DESCRIPTION OF LEARNERS

All 15 learners want a GED because it will improve their employment prospects. Other goals included: reading to their children, helping their children with homework, going to college or training program, using computers. This is a multi-level class with four scoring in the 0-4 range; seven scoring in the 5-8 range; and four scoring in the 9-12 range, according to the TABE. Previous or present work experiences include retail, fast food, clerical and day care.

Handout 5

Self-Evaluation Form

Teacher's Name_____

Mentor's Name_____

Form I: Pre-project Form II: Post-project

Please answer the questions below. If you do not have an answer write N/A or not sure.

1. I teach the following subjects in my classes:

2. I use the following books and materials to improve the students' reading skills:

3. I use the following books and materials to improve the student's writing skills:

4. I use the following books and materials to improve the student's math skills:

5. The 3 primary goals that I believe many of my students want to achieve are:

6. Two skills that they must master in order to achieve the first goal I listed in #5 are:

7. Two skills that they must master in order to achieve the second goal I listed in #5 are:

8. Two skills that they must master in order to achieve the third goal I listed in # 5 are:

9. I define workforce education as:

10. I define pre-employment skills as:

11. I have taught the following pre-employment skills in my class at CFL:

12. I used the following materials to teach the class at CFL:

13. I have taught the following employment skills to my class at CFL:

14. I used the following materials to teach employment skills to my class at CFL:

True or False

___ I have a clear understanding of workforce education.

___ I would feel comfortable teaching a workforce education class.

___ I have received support, materials and/or suggestions from my mentor that helped my practice.

___ I have tried to use workforce education methods/materials in my class but the students weren't interested.

___ I have tried to use workforce education methods/materials in my class but I didn't feel comfortable.

___ I have successfully used workforce education methods/materials in my class.

Additional Comments:

Handout 6

Session Evaluation Form

1. Did this session meet your staff development needs?

2. What information presented today was the most useful?

3. What information did you find to be the least helpful?

4. What additional information would you like to see presented?

5. Would you be interested in presenting one of your lessons to the group?

6. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?

Name (optional):_____

Handout 7

Writing Excellence Professional Development Program -Part I

for XYZ Company

Developed by CFL Workforce Education Division - Jane McGovern, Instructor

Introductions:
Introduce yourself, your connection with XYZ Company, and your purpose for being here. Ask each person in the group to do the same. List all purposes on the board. Review the list and identify the commonalties and differences. Briefly discuss the reasons for the differences and move on to the next step. The group's purpose should be similar and connected to individual and group expectations.

Review seminar overview: (Handout)
Ask the group to read silently. Invite questions about the overview.
Question: Does everybody understand the overview? Is there anythiong you would like to add or take off?

Identify and list written communication uses/needs at XYZ Company.
Question: How do you use writing at XYZ Company?

- Incident reports
- unusual incident reports
- progress notes
- daily logs

Prioritize uses/needs (use scale A-B-C for importance and 1-2-3 for difficulty).
Discuss the reasons for difficulty. (Facilitator should take notes at this point; learners may begin to identify their learning needs).
Question: What do you do the most often?
Question: What is difficult for you? Why is it difficult?

Share and list issues and concerns around above uses of writing.
Question: Do you have any issues/concerns/recommendations regarding incident reports. etc.?

Share and list expectations.
Question: What do you expect to get from this writing seminar?

Assessment Activity: (Handout: Scenario #1)
Directions: Distribute the handouts to the group. Ask for a volunteer to read the directions on the scenario.

Debriefing: Discuss the group's reaction to class
Question: What responses, reactions, feedback, questions, ideas and issues emerged?

Scenario for Writing Activity

Lesson One

You are a direct care worker with the responsibility for developmentally challenged adults. While a consumer in your care is showering, you notice a bruise on her left thigh. After questioning her, you find out that another consumer in the same house hit her while she was on the way to the workshop. You are required to document this information on an incident report. Be sure to follow all agency policies and procedures.

Directions: Read the scenario and use the information above to write a paragraph summarizing the incident. Complete the blank incident report using the same scenario.

Writing Excellence Professional Development Program - Part II

Review:
Review and discuss the main points of the previous lesson.
Question: What stands out for you? What did you find interesting/useful? Are there any questions?

Present the goals of today's lesson:

- identify common aspects of writing
- understand how these aspects relate to writing at XYZ Company
- develop a process for documentation using incident reports
- develop criteria for analyzing / evaluating

Introduce the lesson:
Discuss and list common aspects of all kinds of writing.
Question: What are some characteristics that all kinds of writing have in common?
Help generate ideas by suggesting the following prompts:

- purpose (to inform) **[Why do we write?]**
- audience (describe) **[To whom do we write?]**
- process (list, summarize main ideas) **[How do we write?]**
- content (who, what, when, where, why, how) **[What do we learn from the writing?]**
- mechanics (grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure) **[What form should our writing be in?]**

Relate the characteristics of all writing to writing at XYZ Company:

Purpose

Question: What is the purpose of documentation at XYZ Company? [retain records as required by law] **How does the purpose affect what we write and how we write?** [need for clear, objective, factual writing].

Audience

Question: Who reads what we write? [professionals] **How does this affect what and how we write?** [clear, positive language with accurate information].

Process

Question: How do you complete incident reports? Do you take notes? Do you write incident reports immediately or at the end of your shift?

Content

Question: What kind of information is used in incident reports? What do you report if the incident occurred off your shift? [tip: follow the 5 W's whenever possible - who, what, when, where, why]

Mechanics

Question: How is the image of a professional worker portrayed through Standard English? [correct grammar, spelling, word order, punctuation].

Share issues / concerns

Question: Do you have any issues/concerns about writing incident reports? What is most difficult for you?

Debriefing: Discuss the group's reaction to the class.

Question: What responses, reactions, feedback, questions, ideas and issues emerged?

Handout 8

"Work First" Instructional Model

Registration Form

1. Why did you enroll in this class?

_____ GED
_____ Self - Improvement
_____ Job Readiness
_____ Post Secondary Education
_____ Other:_____

2. How many hours per week are you willing to study?

_____ 0 - 5
_____ 6 - 10
_____ 11 - 15
_____ 16 - 20

3. What do you want to study? (please check all that apply)

Academics:	**Job Readiness:**	**Personal:**
___Reading	___Interview Techniques	___Conflict Resolution
___Writing	___Computer Skills	___Time Management Skills
___Math	___Resume Writing	___Budgeting Skills
___Science	___Cover Letter Writing	___Leadership Skills
___Social Studies	___Public Speaking	___Diversity Training
	___Career Options	___Communication Skills
	___Using Want Ads	

4. Are you interested in working?

_____ Now
_____ After 3 months of instruction
_____ Next Year
_____ Not until I feel I have fully prepared myself.

"Work - First" Instructional Model

Evaluation (After 12 hours)

1. **Do you feel that this class is meeting your needs?**

   _____ Yes
   _____ No

2. **Do you think you have improved in the following areas?**

   _____ Reading Comprehension
   _____ Writing Skills
   _____ Math Ability
   _____ Job Readiness
   _____ Speaking Skills

3. **Are the books and materials you are using helpful?**

   _____ Yes
   _____ No

4. **Do you feel more confident about working?**

   _____ Yes
   _____ No

5. **Do you have any problems getting to class? (please check all that apply)**

   _____ Yes
   - _____ Location
   - _____ Time
   - _____ Need a baby-sitter
   - _____ Job
   - _____ Other:_____

   _____ No

6. **Would you recommend this class to others?**

   _____ Yes
   _____ No

"Work - First" Instructional Model

Evaluation (After 50 hours)

1. **Do you think you have improved in the following areas?**

   _____Reading Comprehension
   _____Writing Skills
   _____Math Ability
   _____Job Readiness
   _____Speaking Skills

2. **Were the books and materials you used in this class helpful?**

   _____ Yes
   _____ No

3. **What are your goals now that you have completed 50 hours of instruction?**

   _____ Continue in class
   _____ Continue education elsewhere
   _____ Look for a job
   _____ Other:_____

4. **Were you satisfied with this class?**

   _____ Yes. Why? _____
   _____
   _____

   _____ No. Why? _____
   _____
   _____

5. **In what specific ways did this class help you the most?**